

Ecology Emergency Summit, Heartlands, 19/05/2023

Report form Richard Newton Chance

Local Nature Partnership - chair Robin Teverson –

Started by listing good things that are happening:

- COP 15 agreed 30% nature recovery land - also protecting the oceans - start to protect marine environment
- Nationally - Wild Isles really highlighted the issues
- Farming in protected landscapes - initiative has got farmers involved - relevant in AONB
- Temperate rain forest - Guy Shrubsole got a mention
- Cornwall one of 5 pilots for Nature recovery strategies - national pilot
- Pip Hoskins running grant applications for nature recovery - LNP

Main message - nature is our life support system - we have to solve the nature crisis

The conference is based on pledge based action

Michaela Strachan - Nature watch woman

Made a programme about the Ice Age for Channel 5 in Svalbard.

Learnt about why we're in the mess we're in:

- this is the end of the last ice age
- last of 5 started 2.5 m years ago
- rapid and dynamic climate change throughout
- Milankovich cycles
- every 100k years path round the sun changes , which means further away = another ice age.

Planet dramatically warming up. We have dramatically sped the end of this one up. Ice cores looking for concentration of methane. The pattern changed radically 170 years ago when we started pumping co2 and methane into the atmosphere. The planet is hugely resilient, but humans need to act now - adapt and evolve. But the evidence needs to be in front of people all the time e.g. the Maldives are disappearing. Coral reefs protect them. Scientists are trying to repair and grow the reefs with more resilient types of coral. The challenge is applying it on a massive scale. Australia - 3d printed coral reef nursery!

Main Message - science and technology can provide answers to specific problems, but needs massive investment to scale it up.

Turkey wild fires

Forest fires have changed vast areas of land. More regular and more devastating over larger areas. They were looking at honey bees and a tiny bug which creates food for honey bees from pine sap. **Biodiversity is so important.**

Regenerative farm

Norfolk where they filmed Spring Watch proves that you can recover full range of fauna and flora. No insecticide for 10 years, no ploughing for 3. Preservation of hedgerows and margins makes a massive difference. Using livestock to improve soil health - they still make a profit, which shows farming and nature recovery can go hand in hand.

Salt marshes are brilliant at storing carbon - much more efficient than planting trees. Michaela has supported scientific studies of how they work.

Finally - We can get out of this by inspiring people to use their imagination and ingenuity and will to change what we do and the impact we have. We are in a mess, but we need to create the solutions.
- "*why drown in deep water when we have the tools to make a snorkel*" Michaela Strachan

Richard Benwell

Chief exec - Wildlife and Countryside Link - national body.

There is an election coming. 5-year electoral cycle, politics is so short term - not enough long term planning, especially around environmental issues.

This government has made pledges around net zero and nature recovery which are enshrined in law - but they are failing to deliver. Farming, planning and nature recovery are all there, but they hesitate at the last minute. Farming - 5 years on still no progress on key issues that were promised on. ELMS still not there. Government good on ambition but poor on practice.

Private sector action - offsetting ok, but only a tiny portion - need to go way beyond this. Need to see proper duties on private industry to make this happen.

Planning for nature - 30% the minimum needed of protected landscapes. AONBs help, but they are not in good condition, they were designed to protect beautiful landscapes, not nature recovery. Govt had the answers, but is resisting taking the steps to implement. Is acting in the opposite direction by stripping away regulations - terrible plan - especially retained EU law bill.

Those big targets give us legal leverage to really campaign for nature recovery - this time things have got to be different - hold the govt to account for the targets and really demand investment in nature by both govt and industry. That's what W&CL will be campaigning for and so should we.

Q&A

Shelley Claxton: Education - nature recovery needs greater emphasis in Science curriculum but also need more countryside recovery courses in Agri colleges - hedge laying, stone wall building, forestry etc.

Valerie Darwell – AONB: asked about change of government - we need to press Labour and Liberal Democrats to continue the current direction, but implement it - increase ELMS, not go back to basic payments system. Nature targets need just as much emphasis as climate targets - lets be the megaphone for the Office of Climate Change.

Tell the truth, but inspire people, don't depress people. People feel paralysed by the climate crisis - must get over that by giving hope.

Pledges for nature

So far Cornwall has 235 pledges for nature covering 14,000 hectares of land - 1/3 of our 2030 target.

Buglife - Andrew Whitehouse Creating bug corridors in N Cornwall - linking habitats - bio-diversity in the corridors key, planting wild flowers - 20 hectares of N Cornwall coast . Stopping insecticide use would be good.

Jane Charman - Geothermal engineering - lots of drilling - 5k deep wells to harness hot water from deep rocks - next year hope to be the first geothermal power station in UK. Smallest footprint of any renewable - so can increase biodiversity gain to 30%. A 5MW plant would save 700k tonnes of CO2 over gas.

Mounts Bay Academy - Shelley Claxton and group of 4 students - they are running a number of projects and groups - creating an eco-friendly school. They have 7 species of bats in their woods. Portable wooden childrens' fire. Really taking it seriously.

Thrussels - Sculptures - Colquite farm - on Bodmin Moor - joined reimagine Kernow - 20 acres of peat marsh - protection and restoration - on common land - requires careful collaboration with farmers. Restoring hedgerows as part of Upstream Thinking. Also restoring a maiden forest on hedgerows as part of Forest for Cornwall. Lots of missed opportunities - need collaborative working.

Marshall Kenner - RAF St Mawgan - no mow may - stopped using herbicides - encouraging hedgerows - will extend into June - now encouraged in all MoD sites in SW. Also planted an orchard and other broadleaf trees. Roots to the future - community garden with polytunnel used by RAF families to grow their own food.

Steve Jones - Red River Rescuers - heavily industrialised mining site - over the last 25 years wetlands have all been overgrown with willow and gorse - not sure about this, but apparently it is helping dragonflies and butterflies. "A unique wildlife corridor."

RJ Working - stop ecocide through ecocide law - 3 earnest students - ecocide law would make companies consider the consequences of their profit making activities as well as making profits.

Matthew Thomson - Sustainable Food Partnership - we are in a serious drought.

Camel Community Supported Agriculture - a farm run by a trust - weekly veg boxes - no dig, nature friendly farming - planting an orchard in their wildflower meadow - never use pesticides or chemical fertilisers. Healthy resilient soil is vital.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust 2300 hectares of land - 1st priority is how they manage the land they do have, 2nd supporting and advising others - especially farmers and fishers. Transition to more regenerative food production 3rd mobilising communities - has worked really well on the coasts not so much in land. Most excited about sea grass beds - need protection. Helman Tor - major rewilding project - need volunteers as well as funding. Have appointed a beaver officer to organise release of Eurasian beavers.

Lucy Crane - Cornish Lithium - everything we use has either been grown or extracted from the ground. Lithium next generation of mining extraction. Two sources - the granite mass is a huge potential source of lithium. Currently the global supply chain is very carbon intensive. They are using an existing china clay pits - pumping water in and extracting lithium. Working with CWT and committed to minimising impact and maximising nature benefits.

Friends of the Fal - woodland community group CIC - Grampound footpath through woodland on the banks of the Fal - lots of partner organisations - work closely with schools and the community -

engaging the community especially children. Outdoor learning area, a bug palace and planted 800 trees.

1. Continue to build and install wildlife habitats
2. Woodland work to encourage light prefoliation to support pollinating plants and trees for the local wildlife by continual replanting of UK native woodland fauna with the community.
3. Monitor the water quality in the river Fal through CSI (Citizen Science).

Bo Sekine - Love Trees Cornwall tiny charity 16 acres to create woodland for kids to use - creating personal links with nature - having a favourite tree - kids create a tiny book about it.

Kit Williams - Par Marsh County Wildlife Site - in CWT magazine.

Rosie Walker - Woodland Trust - Southwest temperate rainforest - high rainfall and high humidity - stable temperature - usually by the sea. only 2% in England is ancient woodland and 1% of that is temperate rainforest. We can create more of it.

Lucy Wilson Richards - Tirwel - landscape architects - "adding nature to my client list" really tailoring development to the place, environment, flora and fauna - helped by the new CC EDP.

Chris King - Presingoll Farm - 200 acres - organic - soil health - got rid of their herd and now plant based - changed farming practices, protection of existing landscape and creating new landscapes - now no till, low pesticides and herbicides, solar energy which runs their farm and sold at discount to neighbouring businesses.

Cornwall Sustainability Awards -

Open for entries until 31st Oct. Nominate or apply.

Open to all; businesses, community organisations, schools, social enterprises and charities.

Categories: Most Sustainable Organisation, Growing Greener, Environmental Growth, Circular Economy, Carbon Neutral. Award ceremony 8th Dec, venue TBC.

Cllr Linda Taylor, Leader of Cornwall Council

Carbon neutral Cornwall by 2030 - they are committed to this - especially recovering nature - pledge for nature campaign launched by them last year - CCC - environmental growth strategy - leading by example - founding members of Leading Edge group of coastal western local authorities - ELMS tests and trials - 30% of Cornwall managed for nature by 2030 - talked about a planning and decision making process which focuses on people, planet and pounds - a consequence based process.

Workshops

Local Nature Recovery Strategy – Priorities for nature recovery

Dougie Hanford and Philippa Hoskin - she is the lead

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are locally-created **statutory** plans that will.

Strengthen local ambitions for nature recovery and nature-based solutions:

- Priorities for action and a spatial blueprint for a Nature Recovery Network

Guide development:

- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Spatial allocations for nature via the Climate Emergency DPD - front runner nationally
- Strengthened biodiversity duties for public authorities

Guide agri-environment:

- Local prioritisation of the forthcoming Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS)

Guide delivery and investment in nature:

- Prioritisation of activity
- New and emerging public & private funding.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is Cornwall Council and the LP's main strategic response to the Ecological Emergency Declaration. Natural England are an advisory (government) body

Will have a key role in ELMS - will enable local prioritisation of ELMS funding - frustrating we are still waiting for government to finalise details.

What's in a LNRS:

- Statement of priorities,
- nature recovery map,
- baseline analysis - the state of nature report

30% of land, rivers and seas to be managed for nature - can be done, but difficult - will need ELMS funding to support.

Look at the network map - where is Calstock? [LAGAS.co.uk](https://www.lagas.co.uk)

One strategy for whole region, so subsumes AONB and our policies - so need to look at this in developing our Recovering Nature plans - look at the draft strategy and the nature recovery toolkit.

Q - how well is this going - example of Golitha Falls where CCC couldn't afford the loss, so a cafe was allowed, which has expanded and damaged the SSSI.

Q - Network Rail doing assessments across the country at the moment - CCC need to engage with them in terms of LNRS.

Q - There is a green skills gap - nature based skills particularly - is there a manpower plan to support any of this.

There is an LNP newsletter - subscribe on the website.

On-line prioritisation exercise for the LNRS.

Getting landowners round the table and on board with small changes is a Start point - Stoke Climsland PC has 21 farms on board around the Rivers Trust project on Luckett stream - including Ian Forest - according to Martin Howlett - Deer Park Farm and chair of the AONB.

Next steps with LNRS - on line events, public survey on line, spring 2024 - draft consulted on
They are offering themselves to come to committee meetings

Q&A session

Vicky Fraser - chief exec of LNP board.

Talk about Bio-abundance, not diversity.

Younger farmers - who influences them to change for the better?

Nature recovery networks - how are they mapped? Mission of LNP is to provide a blueprint for Parish Councils and making the links for people.

Enforcement is key - and the enforcers are understaffed and underfunded - 40% of environmental planning conditions are never met!

EA - area manager - lot of criticism, but funding has massively reduced. Large and growing number of files which they are acting on. Report even if below threshold for action as it helps them establish patterns of behaviour. Natural England have had successes recently. Much more successful with incentives and encouraging people to do the right thing.

Natural England very important player in all this.

Cornwall Council planning doesn't force them to stop work if developers are in breach, other councils do.

If there was a single strategic funding pot then area developments could be properly planned and delivered. LNP actually does have a pipeline of schemes to deliver.

ELMS pilot launched yesterday by DEFRA emphasises net zero in farming practice
Local area energy plans are being developed by Cornwall - mapping exercise - backed by £500k
Regional groups? There are, but doesn't seem high in the ecosystem.

All in all, worth going as lots of interesting stuff going on across the county. We need to be localising to Cornwall's Local Nature Recovery Strategy in developing the Recovering Nature strand of our work.

Richard NC
19 May 2023